the King gone to night, ſubſcrib'd his power, confined to exhibition, all this done vpon the gad; *Edmund*, how now, what newes?

Baſt. So pleaſe your Lordſhip, none.

Gloſt. Why ſo earneſtly ſeeke you to put vp that letter?

Baſt. I know no newes, my Lord.

Glo. What paper were you reading?

Baſt. Nothing my Lord.

Gloſt. No, what needs then that terrible diſpatch of it into your pocket, the quality of nothing hath not ſuch need to hide it ſelfe, lets ſee, come if it be nothing I ſhal not need ſpectacles.

Baſt. I beſeech you ſir pardon me, it is a Letter from my brother, that I haue not all ore read, for ſo much as I haue peruſed, I finde it not fit for your liking.

Gloſt. Giue me the letter ſir.

Baſt. I ſhall offend, either to detaine or giue it, the contents as in part I vnderſtand them, are too blame.

Glo. Lets ſee, Lets ſee.

Baſt. I hope for my brothers iuſtification, he wrote this but as an eſſay, or taſte of my vertue. *A Letter.*

Gloſt. This policy of age makes the world bitter to the beſt of our times, keepes our fortunes from vs till our oldneſſe cannot relliſh them, I begin to finde an idle and fond bondage in the oppreſſion of aged tyranny, who ſwaies not as it hath power, but as it is ſuffered, come to mee, that of this I may ſpeake more; if our Father would ſleepe till I wakt him, you ſhould enioy halfe his reuenew for euer, and liue the beloued of your brother *Edgar*.

Hum, conſpiracy, ſlept till I wakt him, you ſhould enioy halfe his reuenew: my ſonne *Edgar*, had he a hand to write this, a hart and braine to breed it in? when came this to you, who brought it?

Baſt. It was not brought me my Lord, there's the cunuing of it, I found it throwne in at the caſement of my Cloſet.

Gloſt. You know the carracter to be your brothers?

Baſt. If the matter were good, my Lord, I durſt ſweare it were his, but in reſpect of that, I would faine think it were not.

Gloſt.

Gloſt. Is it his?

Baſt. It is his hand my
the contents.

Gloſt. Hath he neuer h
neſſe?

Baſt. Neuer my Lord, b
it to be fit, that ſonnes at pe
father ſhould be as Ward t
the reuenew.

Gloſt. O villaine, villaine
horrid villaine, vnnaturall c
bruitiſh, go ſir ſeeke him; I
laine, where is he?

Baſt. I do not well kn
ſuſpend your indignation a
riue from him better teſtim
certaine courſe, where if yo
ſtaking his purpoſe, it wo
honour, and ſhake in peece
pawne downe my life for h
affection to your Honour, a

Gloſt. Thinke you ſo?

Baſt. If your Honour iud
you ſhall heare vs conferre
haue your ſatisfaction, and
this very euening.

Gloſt. He cannot be ſuch

Baſt. Nor is not ſure.

Gloſt. To his father, tha
heauen and earth! *Edmund*
pray you frame your buſine
vnſtate my ſelfe ro be in a c

Baſt. I ſhall ſeeke him ſ
ſhall ſee meanes, and acqua

Glo. Theſe late Eclipſes i
good to vs, though the wiſ
thus, yet nature findes it ſ

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE *King Lear* (STC 22293) LONDON, 1608 [1619] NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOT